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LETTER DATED 19 FEBRUARY 1998 FROM THE SECRETARY-GENERAL
ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL

In its resolution 1133 (1997) of 20 October 1997, the Security Council requested me to report every 60 days from the date of extension of the mandate of the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO) on the progress in the implementation of the settlement plan and the agreements reached between the parties for its implementation. Following my report of 13 November 1997 (S/1997/882), which included a timetable and my recommendations for the full deployment of MINURSO, I provided, in a letter to the President of the Security Council dated 12 December 1997 (S/1997/974), an account of the identification of potential voters in the referendum since its resumption on 3 December. My report to the Council dated 15 January 1998 (S/1998/35) provided a further detailed account of that process and of other activities in implementation of the settlement plan. Since then there have been several important developments.

As members of the Council are aware, my Special Representative, Mr. Charles F. Dunbar, arrived in the mission area on 9 February 1998. In Rabat, he was received by His Majesty King Hassan II and had meetings with the Prime Minister and Minister for Foreign Affairs and Cooperation, Mr. Abdellatif Filali, and with the Minister of State for the Interior, Mr. Driss Basri. In the Tindouf area, he met with the Secretary-General of the Frente Popular para la Liberación de Saguía el-Hamra y del Río de Oro (Frente POLISARIO), Mr. Mohammed Abdelaziz, and other Frente POLISARIO leaders. Mr. Dunbar assumed his duties at MINURSO headquarters in Laayoune on 16 February. He travelled to Algiers on 17 February to meet with the Algerian authorities, and will proceed to Nouakchott shortly to meet with the Mauritanian authorities.

During the reporting period, my Acting Special Representative, Mr. Erik Jensen, maintained regular contacts with the parties to resolve difficulties which continued to arise, in particular in the identification process. The Chairman of the Identification Commission, Mr. Robin Kinloch, also held regular consultations with the Moroccan and Frente POLISARIO coordinators with MINURSO. Following visits by the Commission Chairman to Nouakchott and by a technical mission to Zouerate in Mauritania, plans were finalized to open an

